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WASHINGTON, D. C., NOV. 4, 1905.

TO THE EDITOR:

The late number of your magazine, in its new form, is more convenient, pleasing and attractive. But it is distinctively the artists' and enthusiasts' magazine, and so "form" matters little. It is compact and full of news and authoritative, and, what is most important, personal and honest.

It is undoubtedly interesting to read what the dealers and interested parties have to say of their wares even though it appears as earnest, impersonal art criticism—and the field is full of that sort of thing. But reviews and opinions, sincere and frank, are what really cultivated people and earnest art workers want, and it looks as though that was what *you* are doing. Such a venture ought to be well supported, and *will be* if the artists and buyers realize who their real disinterested friends are.

Sincerely yours,

AN ARTIST.

Surely too much praise for a modest man. Still a letter like this is a source of pleasure and encouragement. Applause is our spur, not our end and aim.

Many thanks!

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"PHOTOGRAPHY AS A MEDIUM OF ART INSTRUCTION."

BROOKLYN, NOV. 1.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC:

DEAR SIR:—The article appearing in your last number under above caption seems to me to be very visionary and impracticable.

To teach photography in the public schools cameras and other paraphernalia would have to be provided for the classes, as such expensive frills could not well be loaded on the parents, and the Board of Education would surely be at a loss where to get the funds. Further, the curriculum for studies aside from the three R's is already more elaborate than many think wise to give an opportunity for furnishing a sound "common school education." Instead of adding to many unnecessary studies, more hours should be devoted to our native tongue and literature.

I would, however, question even the very premise on which Mr. MacDonald founds his suggestion. A personal appreciation of art will never be developed by dexterity in mechanical processes. The pianola does not make musicians or even music lovers, nor would the camera produce artists or art lovers. The highest art requires individual expression—not copying, just what makes an original drawing or painting superior to a lithograph or color production and a wood-cut superior to a half-tone. It is well enough to provide photographs for the contemplation and study a part in the public schools to develop esthetic taste, but it is hardly necessary to teach the scholars how to make these photographs themselves.

Sincerely yours, C. L.

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TO THE EDITOR:

SIR:—I read with much interest in your last number a proposition from Mr. Pirie MacDonald to teach photography in the public schools. I was impressed by this statement in Mr. MacDonald's article: "The improvement of art instincts by educational conditions, its expansion into wholesome consciousness, is neglected at present in the drawing lessons at our public schools."

I wish Mr. MacDonald had stated which of the drawing classes of our public schools he visited and how thoroughly he investigated public art instruction before making the sweeping charge that the art instinct is neglected in the drawing lessons in our public schools. I have made inquiries of a number of drawing teachers, who say that they have never been honored by a call from Mr. MacDonald, and have had no inkling of any investigation by him of the drawing instruction in the public schools.

My own experience has been such as to lead me to take directly the opposite stand from Mr. MacDonald. For twenty years I have been intimately familiar with the teaching of drawing in the public schools of Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, New York and New England. I have attended the conventions of the drawing

teachers and have visited the drawing classes of Boston, Philadelphia, Toledo, Grand Rapids, Minneapolis, Brooklyn, and New York. I have seen in the national expositions the work of drawing classes of public schools in various other parts of the country. From the aims expressed by the drawing teachers and from the work produced by their pupils I should say that if there is anything which is not only not neglected but is emphasized and kept prominent it is "the befriending of art instincts into wholesome consciousness and natural expansion."

Will Mr. MacDonald visit the drawing classes of the Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn or of the Bryant High School in Queens, or of the Curtis High School on Staten Island, or of any of the High Schools in Manhattan or the Bronx, and point out what evidences he finds for his sweeping statement? Has Mr. MacDonald seen the annual exhibition of art work of the New York elementary schools at Fifty-ninth Street and Park Avenue, or at the American History Museum, or the exhibit of the Brooklyn Teachers' Association? The professed purpose of the drawing teachers of America is art appreciation. To see and to feel beauty is the end desired by those who are using drawing as a medium of instruction. Mr. MacDonald's statement that public school drawing "substitutes imitation and a sterile process for the vital and subjective powers of originality and artistic instinct" seems to me a most unfortunate statement when unaccompanied by proof. Examine any of the manuals in common use, read any of the current articles on art in the educational art journals, hear any of the addresses at educational meetings, and you will find that the tendency and spirit of public school art instruction is just what Mr. MacDonald says it is not.

I am especially interested in Mr. MacDonald's remedy for his imagined shortcomings in the schools. "Instead of some of the frills and fancies," he says, "the future generation would show a keener appreciation of esthetic qualities" if they studied photography instead of drawing. A careful study of Mr. MacDonald's article fails to disclose any argument in favor of his contention other than his statement that photography is easier than drawing. "Instead of drawing," says Mr. MacDonald, "the child can let the camera draw for him." "The child's work is purely mechanical," says he, which leaves all the artistic work for the camera itself.

I am at utter loss to understand how anyone condemning drawing as mere imitation (which public school drawing is not) can recommend as an exercise in artistic originality the use of a chemical plate and a mechanical copying machine. Mr. MacDonald is talking through his camera.

REMBRANDT SMITH.

New York, Nov. 1, 1905.

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NEW YORK, NOV. 4, 1905.

TO THE EDITOR:

DEAR SIR:—As an old subscriber you must pardon me a question. Is your advocacy and commendation of the modern Dutch School the result of unbiased critical study, or of personal preference?

Respectfully yours,

AN AMERICAN ARTIST.

Of both, and personal preference as a result of critical study.

Although myself a Hollander by birth, I have for a score of years been a right loyal American citizen. Nor do I believe that blind prejudice enters in my make-up.

I advocate the study of the Dutch painters by American landscape artists and advise them to paint in Holland rather than in any other country, because the best teachers are there, the best art atmosphere will surround them.

It is in workmanship that the painters of Holland excel. The skilled eye and the trained hand are theirs, and as masters of the craft of painting they are pre-eminently strong. There never has been a finer artistic feeling shown in art than in the pictures of these Dutchmen. They grow emotional over bursts of light, sympathetic over color harmonies, mysterious in shadow masses.

And as the French concede that the best landscapes in the annual Salons are by Americans, so I can point to the Dutch School as the only one from which the graduated American painter may still learn.

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LOUISVILLE, KY., October 27, 1905.

TO THE EDITOR:

Will you kindly tell me who are the foremost modern painters of religious subjects, and oblige,

Very truly,

E. K.

Many of the foremost painters of the day have taken religious subjects at times, such as Sargent, Beraud, Dagnan-Bouveret, and others. A few names of those who have been especially prominent occur to me at the moment. They are: Joh. Friedrich Overbeck, Eduard von Gebhardt, Müller, Fritz von Uhde, Tissot, Franz Ittenbach, Anton Dietrich, E. Deger, Holman-Hunt.